

*Because kids don't come with directions!*

# PARENT PAGES

A quarterly digital publication from the  
Howard County Office of Children and Families

APRIL 2018

## Howard County's Newest Little Free Library

Little Free Libraries (LFL) are freestanding boxes filled with books for all ages. Each displays the motto, "Take a Book, Return a Book." Anyone can take a book, return it, or bring a different book to keep the box populated with new titles. LFLs have been introduced into communities around the world to inspire people and motivate readers. This inspires a love of reading, builds community, and sparks creativity by fostering neighborhood book exchanges.

On April 20, the North Laurel Community Center (NLCC) will become home to the newest Little Free Library in Howard County. To support the Launch Into Learning initiative, the Howard County Early Childhood Advisory Council reviewed the map of LFL locations around the county and chose an area which did not yet have a registered library. The committee hopes that the NLCC's many visitors will help make this new location a vibrant spot that supports a strong literacy movement.

Books for all ages include:

- Board books for babies
- Picture books for preschoolers
- Easy readers for beginning readers
- Chapter books for children and adolescents
- Fiction and nonfiction for adults

The committee hopes this effort will serve as a springboard for other volunteers in the community to start up their own LFL and increase the number of free books available in the area.

**For more information on how to become a steward and learn the step-by-step process to start your own LFL, visit <https://littlefreelibrary.org/>**

## Howard County GreenFest 2018

**Saturday, April 21 • 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**  
**Howard Community College**  
**Burrill Galleria and Quad**  
**10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, MD**



GreenFest is Howard County's premier, family-oriented Earth Day celebration. Enjoy a variety of fun and free outdoor activities, workshops, and giveaways; purchase

plants from the native plant sale; donate unwanted goods to GreenDrop; bring clothing or household appliances to the Repair Café; and visit the green businesses and nonprofits on the “Green Mall.” There will also be food vendors, live birds and reptiles.

**A schedule of workshops and other information will be posted at [www.HCGreenFest.org](http://www.HCGreenFest.org); stay tuned for updates through the LiveGreenHoward Facebook page.**

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## Talk With Me

### Your baby's brain grows with every interaction you have together!

Simple interactions help babies to be prepared for school - and life! Talk With Me! Howard County is a new initiative designed to help Howard County parents understand how talking with their babies is crucial to their development. In partnership with the Howard County Public School System, this effort mobilizes the community to help neighbors, family, caregivers, and friends reach out and learn to interact with the babies in our lives.

It's simple: Children whose parents talk with them on a regular basis are put on a path towards *better development* in school and in life. We know that *babies communicate for a reason*; responding to a baby's cries, needs, and preferences in a positive way helps foster better communication skills. We also know that having a rich interactive relationship with children sets them on the road toward good mental health. Whether you speak to them in your heritage language, or in more than one language, your baby will benefit from communicating with you.

**If you are interested in having a trainer come to your community group in Fall 2018, or if you'd like to become a trainer yourself, contact Bonnie Bricker at [bonbricker@gmail.com](mailto:bonbricker@gmail.com)**

**Learn more at [www.hcpss.org/talkwithme](http://www.hcpss.org/talkwithme) and keep that conversation going!**

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## Preparing Family for Hazardous Winds

While a nice breeze is great in the summertime, strong winds can be hazardous, as we saw recently in March. Whether it's a winter or summer storm, tornado or hurricane, high winds can result in dangerous situations. Prepare your family and loved ones before the storm by considering the following tips:

- Prepare for sustained power outages. Whether it's air conditioning or heat, prepare to go without for at least 72 hours.
- If you require power for a medical device, consider making additional plans. Is there a neighbor, friend, or family member you could stay with until power is restored? A hotel? Is the hotel pet friendly?

### For life-threatening emergencies, ALWAYS call 9-1-1!

- Keep your phones and other mobile devices charged and have plenty of power banks available as a back-up charging option.
- Bring any unsecured, lightweight objects like porch furniture, plants, etc. inside and secure trampolines.
- Monitor local weather and emergency management services for the most up-to-date information.
- Build and update your emergency preparedness kit. Include plenty of:
  1. water and non-perishable food items;
  2. flashlights with extra batteries;
  3. blankets, or in the summer, battery-powered fans.

## During and After the Storm

- Make sure pets are kept inside for the duration of the storm.
- For winds over 30 mph, avoid driving. If you must drive, be cautious and keep a look out for fallen trees and downed power lines.
- Report downed power lines and outages to your power company immediately.
- If you have a generator, never use it indoors.
- Check on elderly neighbors, friends, or family members who could be adversely affected by a sustained power outage.
- If the power is out for more than two hours, and temperatures are above 40 °F, discard any perishable foods (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers). Never taste food to determine its safety.

**For more information on the safety of specific foods:**

**[https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/refridg\\_food.html](https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/refridg_food.html)**

**For more information on hazards in Howard County and how to prepare, visit [ReadyHoCo.com](http://ReadyHoCo.com)**

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## Outdoor Play Promotes Healthy Brain Development

There is significant research that supports the connection between brain development and children having the opportunity to participate in recess / outdoor play during the school day. The Parents as Teachers program recommends that children play outdoors to allow them to exercise their large muscles and practice balance skills. These activities can support brain development by allowing the brain to coordinate messages from different sources - muscles, senses, and balance.

Furthermore, children develop fine and gross motor skills as well as dexterity and balance through exploring, risk-taking and just having fun on the playground. Another natural benefit of playing outdoors is releasing stress which comes from being exposed to nature. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) describes unstructured physical play as a developmentally appropriate outlet for reducing stress in children. Unstructured play allows children the opportunity to make choices, plan, and expand their creativity.

Exploring the backyard, neighborhood, playgrounds and parks provides hands-on experiences that stimulate a child's senses and can also introduce them to science and math concepts. When children are given the opportunity to physically demonstrate action words as stomp, pounce, stalk, or slither, or descriptive words such as smooth, strong, gentle, or enormous, word comprehension is immediate and long lasting. For example, when children move over, under, and near objects and others, the child better grasps the meaning of these concepts.

**The Parents as Teachers program curriculum includes a variety of child-led outdoor play:**

- Ball play is a good outdoor activity, has fewer rules and promotes gross and fine motor development.
- A nature walk through a neighborhood will introduce the child to new sights, sounds and smells. Name the things you look at or touch, listen to the sounds and bring a small bag to collect what you discover.
- Sand play is a great sensory activity. The child can explore the texture, size and color, shape and smell.
- Water play is an excellent indoor or outdoor activity. Be creative and add materials to allow further exploration.

Child's play is not just all fun and games; the act of play is a crucial component in the growth and development of a child's brain, body and intellect.

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# CARE Line Call Highlight

*Not sure who to call or if your concern is appropriate for the CARE Line?*

The CARE Line receives calls on a variety of topics, including behavior issues, finding child care, county resources, special needs, mental health concerns, grandparents resources, adolescent concerns and much more.

## **An example of a call received two weeks before Christmas:**

A grandparent who had recently become the custodial caretaker of six grandchildren ranging in age from 3 weeks to 11 years called initially because she was in need of car seats, cribs, clothing and diapers. The CARE Line connected the grandmother to agencies and programs that were able to provide these for her. Upon further discussion, the grandmother revealed that she also needed to find more affordable child care options closer to her home, and was given information for LOCATE: Child Care, which provides listings of licensed child care to meet families' needs. A CARE Line specialist also discovered the grandmother had no means to provide holiday gifts for the children, and that they needed clothing and shoes. Ultimately, with the help of the Howard County Multi Service Center, this family was "adopted" and received the assistance they were looking for.

By making that initial telephone call, talking with an Information & Referral Specialist, and following up on the provided resources, this family received the help and support they needed.

**The CARE Line is here to listen to your questions or concerns, and can link you to county resources. Please feel free to contact the CARE Line at 410-313-CARE (2273) or [children@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:children@howardcountymd.gov)**

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## **SENIOR WEEK**

### **Staying Safe in Ocean City**

Once again, HC DrugFree will offer their annual "Senior Week: Staying Safe in Ocean City" program. Attend to hear beach safety tips and beach-related police updates to keep your teen safe.

**Tuesday, April 24 • 7:00 p.m.  
Mt. Hebron High School Auditorium**

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## **HC DrugFree Collection**

Howard County's next drive-thru prescription and collection of over-the-counter medication and "sharps" (needles, syringes and EpiPens). To sign up for HC DrugFree's newsletter or find out more information, visit: [www.hcdrugfree.org](http://www.hcdrugfree.org).

**Saturday, April 28 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Wilde Lake Village Center Parking Lot**

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## **CPR/AED Training**

When a person goes into Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), his or her survival depends on immediately getting cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) from someone nearby. Eighty-eight percent of all cardiac arrests occur at home or at work, so the chances of you knowing the person are very high.

According to the American Heart Association, nationwide, less than one-third of those who

suffer cardiac arrest at home, work or in a public place receive CPR.

400,000 people die annually in the U.S., often because bystanders don't know CPR!

- Get trained in CPR! Sign up to attend a Hands-Only CPR class and learn how to save the life of someone in cardiac arrest.
- Spread the word! Tell your family, friends, and co-workers about our program and download the PulsePoint app today: [www.pulsepoint.org/download](http://www.pulsepoint.org/download)
- Please note: this is a non-certification class.
- Help save a life! When SCA happens, act fast! Call 911 and begin CPR until help arrives.

Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (HCDFRS) offers Hands-Only CPR training at no cost. During our classes, you will learn how to perform Hands-Only CPR on adults; CPR for children and infants; AED training; and the proper techniques for choking relief.

**Upcoming dates for 2018 CPR classes are:**

- April 25, from 6 to 8 p.m., at HCDFRS Headquarters, 6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., Suite 400, Columbia 21046
- June 6, from 6 to 8 p.m., at Public Safety Training Center, 2200 Scott Wheeler Dr., Marriottsville 21104

**To sign up for CPR Classes, visit:**

**<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Fire-and-Rescue/>**

**Sign-Up-for-Adult-Child-Infant-CPR-Training or**

**email [handsonlycpr@hcdfrs.org](mailto:handsonlycpr@hcdfrs.org) to register. Download PulsePoint, Save a Life**

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## Healthy Transitions Group

The Healthy Transitions workshop series is geared towards the needs of 16-25 year olds, and serves emerging adults with mental health challenges in the Howard County community. The workshops are open to any 16-25 year old who wishes to participate; RSVP is required 24 hours in advance to attend.

**April 19 — Sexual Health**

**April 26 — Homestretch Documentary**

**May 2 — Self-Protection Workshop**

**May 9 — Suicide Prevention**

**If you have any questions, would like more information about the workshop topics, or would like to RSVP, contact Juli Murray at [jmurray@humanim.org](mailto:jmurray@humanim.org), [www.humanim.org](http://www.humanim.org) or [www.facebook.com/MarylandHealthyTransitions](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandHealthyTransitions)**

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## Freezing Your Child's Credit Report

When data breaches happen, children as well as adults are at risk for identity theft. Identity thieves can use a child's social security number to establish credit files with credit reporting agencies. Those files are then manipulated to enable identity thieves to steal money, government benefits and medical services. Children who are victims often don't discover the theft until years later when they apply for college loans, rental housing or auto financing.

You can protect your child's identity by placing a "freeze" on his/her credit report. A "credit freeze" prohibits credit reporting agencies from releasing the information needed to determine a person's credit worthiness. Without that information, identity thieves can't use your child's information to open accounts or otherwise obtain credit.

Credit freezes are effective but require some effort on your part. First, you must apply for a freeze with all three credit agencies separately, using the application and procedures required by each. You will also be charged a fee of no more than \$5 by each agency.



Credit agencies also require copies of personal documents, such as birth certificates, to prove you are the child's parent or guardian and not an identity thief. Some parents are uncomfortable transmitting such information to credit agencies - either electronically or by mail - but the benefits of a credit freeze usually outweigh the risks.

**To freeze your child's credit report, contact each bureau directly:**

- **Equifax:** 800-685-1111 or [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com);
- **Experian:** 888-397-3742 or [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com); and
- **Transunion:** 888-909-8872 or [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

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## Where Did My Money Go?

The world of finance can be unnecessarily confusing; it can make you want to just stick your head in the sand and hope it all gets better. That, of course, is the last thing you should do! Here are some tips to help you become a better money manager, and get you back on the road to financial stability:

1. Take the time to **TRACK** all of your spending, right down to the penny, for at least one month and preferably longer, until you have a good idea of your spending habits. Even small amounts can add up quickly.
2. **AFTER** you have adequately tracked your spending, prepare a **WRITTEN** spending plan, a.k.a. **BUDGET**, allocating all your expenses to an appropriate category in specific detail. (E.g., under car costs, include gas, maintenance, insurance, etc.)
3. Use only **NET** income for budgeting and consider your earnings as if you were paid by the hour. This helps you make decisions about spending based on how long you have to work to buy what you desire.
4. Pay strict attention to **NEEDS** vs. **WANTS**.
5. Always be thinking of ways to reduce your debt.
6. Follow the rule of **PAY YOURSELF FIRST**.
7. Remember to use **CASH** in your efforts to spend less.
8. **INTEREST** is free money, so look for ways to **GET** it rather than **GIVE** it.

Resources to start your child on the path to financial literacy:

- [PracticalMoneySkills.com](http://PracticalMoneySkills.com)
- [JumpStartCoalition.org](http://JumpStartCoalition.org)
- [FeedthePig.org](http://FeedthePig.org)
- Make Your Kid a Money Genius by Beth Kobliner

**If you want to learn more about ways to manage your money, attend "Where Did my Money Go?" at the Howard County Library, Elkridge Branch on May 8 at 7 p.m.**

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## Explore Columbia's Sister Cities Without Leaving Columbia

Learn about the cultures of China, France, Ghana, Haiti and Spain at The Mall in Columbia on **Sunday, April 22**. "Explore Columbia's Sister Cities: 5 Countries in 4 Hours" is an afternoon of music, dance and other performances, with informative table displays.

It will be held from 1-5 p.m. at the Lord & Taylor lower level court at The Columbia Mall, 10300 Little Patuxent Parkway.

The event features Columbia's four sister cities - Cergy-Pontoise, France; Tema, Ghana; Cap-Haitien, Haiti; and Tres Cantos, Spain - plus Liyang, China, which has been proposed as Columbia's fifth sister city.

In between performances, visitors can speak with representatives from the various sister city committees; explore the different cultures; learn about local events; discover travel opportunities for youth and adults; find out how to host someone from one of Columbia's sister cities during exchange visits; or join one of the sister city advisory committees.

The event is organized by Columbia Association's (CA) International Exchange and Multicultural Programs. CA creates and manages the sister city relationships for Columbia, and also develops multicultural programs for the community such as the World Languages Café, CultureFests and the International Book Club.

**For more information, visit [www.ColumbiaAssociation.org/multicultural](http://www.ColumbiaAssociation.org/multicultural) or call 410-715-3162.**

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## Parent Informational Session on Sexting, Bullying & Cyberbullying

Hosted by the Howard County Police Department, the presentation will break down the laws so parents have a clear understanding and explanation of the role of law enforcement response to each topic.

Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2018 from 6 p.m.- 8 p.m. at Howard County Library, Central Branch  
10375 Little Patuxent Pkwy, Columbia, MD 21044.  
Space is limited, parents must register by calling 410-313-2207

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## Howard County's First #OneHoward Live Event

A collaboration of organizations throughout Howard County, #OneHoward Live's first event, "Celebrating Diversity, Strengthening Community" is seeking to add enlightening presentations which promote dialogue and inclusion. The event will celebrate the diverse experiences/perspectives that exist within Howard County, while also striving to find and highlight inclusive ways of being a community. Because everyone's story is important, we want to hear from people of all backgrounds, especially students!

**The event will be held at the Smith Theatre on June 16 at 1:00 p.m. and will include a day of presentations, inspirational videos and opportunities for audience discussion.**

If you have a story, performance, testimony, or multimedia presentation that you would like to share with the community, complete the Presenter Interest Form at:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1TBzSBbnSrfNgQcYANuKh\\_aI3B8wftk6rCkPAmDyQsbA/viewform?edit\\_requested=true](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1TBzSBbnSrfNgQcYANuKh_aI3B8wftk6rCkPAmDyQsbA/viewform?edit_requested=true)

**Registration deadline is April 23.** For details, email: [ahoward@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:ahoward@howardcountymd.gov)

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## Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood Celebrates Screen-Free Week

*Our friends at Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood remind us to Celebrate Screen-Free Week!*

From **April 30-May 6, 2018**, children, families, entire schools, and communities will rediscover the joys of life beyond the screen. Plan to unplug from digital entertainment and spend all that free time playing, reading, daydreaming, creating, exploring, and connecting with family and friends!

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# The Family Institute

A PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM • Howard County Office of Children and Families

## April Workshop

### Teen Parenting Strategies: Strengthening Relationships and Improving Behavior

**Thursday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.**

**Clarksville Middle School, Media Center**

**6535 S. Trotter Road, Clarksville 21029**

**FREE. Space is limited; Pre-registration is required.**

Parenting a teen today can be extremely challenging and frustrating. Parents typically find that as children grow into the teen years, new behaviors emerge and the old methods used to interact with them need a new approach in order to be successful.

Parents, grandparents and guardians who attend this workshop will discover how to:

- Review common behavior problems in teens
- Learn strategies to communicate and strengthen your relationship
- Create a positive environment for your relationship to grow
- Introduce strategies to improve your teen's behavior
- Learn ways to help your teen choose positive coping skills
- Learn techniques to demonstrate strategies to help your child process and solve their worries

# DCRS

*on the move*

To serve you better, in Summer 2018,  
all DCRS offices will be moving to the  
Howard County community resources  
campus located at:

**9830 Patuxent Woods Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046**

The Howard County Department of Community Resources and Services (DCRS) provides vital human services through its eight offices, which will be located together for your convenience:



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|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▶ ADA Coordination       | ▶ Consumer Protection            |
| ▶ Aging and Independence | ▶ Human Trafficking Prevention   |
| ▶ Children and Families  | ▶ The Local Children's Board     |
| ▶ Community Partnerships | ▶ Veterans and Military Families |

410-313-6400 (VOICE/RELAY) • [www.facebook.com/HoCoCommunity](http://www.facebook.com/HoCoCommunity) • [www.howardcountymd.gov/communityresources](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/communityresources)

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